32.

A Sober and Seasonable

Commemoration

OF

The Thirtieth Day of *January*, 1648.

Being the Day of the Martyrdom of

King CHARLES the first.

And fit to be Considered upon the *Anniversary* FAST for the same.

By the same Hand as Wrote Vox Populi; *Or*, *ENGLANDS* Lamentation.

IF we look back, and seriously consider the many Calamities of our late Wars, and Retrospect into the Causes both Evident and Remote, which brought that Deluge of Misery upon three (then almost Ruined) Kingdoms, and the Bloody Sequel of all those troubles, the Beheading of that Vertuous and pious King *Charles* the First, in the Memory of which we yearly keep a Fast for the same, that God will be pleased never more to visit us in his Wrath, nor give us the like Dreadful occasion of Sackcloth and Ashes: I say, if we did most seriously consider, as we ought, from the greatest to the least, we should not tread the same paths leading to Destruction, nor run in the ways of Iniquities.

They who yet well remember the Transactions of those Times, before we were rent and torn with Civil Wars, and now seriously weigh in the Ballance of Judgement, the posture and Actions of Affairs at this present, may see too much Similitude, if not to fear as bad and fatal Consequences. It would therefore be well for every man at this day, to consider and say with himself, if *I have committed Iniquity, I will commit it no more.* It will be seasonable now as much as ever, for King and People, both great and small, to Commemorate and think upon the sadness of that day, when all faces look'd pale, and when the Land mourn'd, when they beheld with bleeding hearts, the sad Effects of Divisions, War, and Rebellion, falling upon the head of their Soveraign, and Bondage and Slavery flung upon the necks of the people.

Prorogative on the one side, and *Priviledge* on the other, first began, then *Religion* which should be all peace, increas'd the Trouble: Factions were made, parties assembled, Councels were taken, Cabals were formed, Fears were hightned, Jealousies increas'd, Heart-burnings fomented, and at last War was raised, but the sad and fatal Consequence of all was, the violent Death of Sacred *Majesty*, and for a time the Seclusion of *Monarchy*. And now how far we are running in the same paths, and treading the like *Mazes*, till we shall be lost in a Labyrinth of Woe and Confusion, every one sees, who can remember, or read the Transactions of former times. Several of late have loudly cry'd out, *How like is this to* 41. and His Majesties ears have been blown into, with the remembrances of the evil Actions of evil men, whereby fears and Jealousies may justly be raised in his Royal Breast, against his good Subjects and have still apprehensions of the fatal effects of 48. But however like these beginnings seem to those troublesome times, there is yet this difference plainly appears, that now it is not *Episcopacy* and *Presbitery* that contend, but *Protestantism* and *Popery*: The Church of *England* is as much concerned as the *Presbyters*, and both now justly full of fears and apprehensions, seek to secure their *Religion*, their *Lives*, and their *Fortunes*.

But let us not push on too violently our Evil Fate, which by Gods permission, is like to rush upon us, for the Sins of the People: Let us I say, remember this Dreadful day, wherein *Monarchy* was laid in the Dust, and the most pious and vertuous Prince that ever sat on our Throne, brought as a Lamb to the slaughter: Think of this both King and People, and let this *Anniversary* be effectually consider'd, that it may put some stop to the Violences which seem to be preparing by several Factions. God hath given us a time of Peace and plenty, and every man hath sat quietly under his Vine and his Figg-Tree; our Temples have been Crown'd, and good things have flowed in upon us, our King hath been restored to us, and he hath received miraculous and strange Deliverances, and Seated at last on the Throne of his Ancestors; but what have we returned for such Signal Mercies, may we not cry out with *Daniel*, and say, *We have sinned and have committed Iniquity, and have done Wickedly, and have*

have Rebelled, even by departing from thy Precepts, and from thy Judgements, O God. O Lord, to us belongs Confusion of Faces, to our Kings, to our Princes, and to our Fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

Let us I say, remember this Fatal Day, and the more like these Times look to those preceeding our late troubles, let us the more think of their fatal Effects, and let all men from the greatest to the lowest, from the Cedar to the Shrub, endeavour to reform themselves, and pray God to avert his impending Judgements, for we doubt it was Sin that before brought on Judgement, and it is now our many Sins, and open Iniquites, that are like to call down Gods Wrath and Vengeance upon us, to be a scourge to this Nation, unless we seriously Repent, and turn from our evil ways: Otherwise, I fear we shall see the Prophesie of *Jeremiah* fulfilled upon us: *The Whirl-wind of the Lord is gone forth in Fury, even as a grievous Whirl-wind, it shall fall grievously upon the head of the Wicked: The Anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have Executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his Heart.*

But we know, that *God is Merciful and Gracious, long Suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity, and Transgression, and Sin*: Therefore, let us all I say, remember the sad Effects of our late Divisions, and from the highest to the lowest, let us humble our selves before the Lord, that he may turn from us all those Evils which now seem to threaten us, that we may have peace in our days. For as at the Preaching of *Jonas*, the *Ninivites* Repented, and mourned in Sack-cloth and Ashes, whereby they pacified the Wrath of God, so who knows, how much our hearty Prayers and true Repentance, forsaking our evil ways, may prevail upon the Almighty, to take pitty upon us, and pacifie his Wrath, and cause his Countenance to shine upon us. He *turneth the hearts of Kings, as the Rivers of Waters*, and he *stoppeth the Rage of the Multitude*: He Creates and destroys as he pleaseth; *By him Kings Reign*, and *by him we all Live, move, and have our being*, and therefore, *Blessed be the Name of the Lord.*

As the Thirtieth of *January* is my Text, so I would press it home at this time, on the hearts of all people, who seem to be full of Trouble and Anxiety. We need not run to prophane Histories, which give us sufficient Examples of the sad miseries and fatal Consequences, of Breaches between King and people: and our own *Chronicles* furnish us with sad precidents, too like our times to be pointed at: All that read and consider, may see the sad Effects of desire of *Arbitrary Government*, under the Notion of *Prerogative*; and also *Rebellion*, under that of *Priviledges* & *Liberty of Conscience*, both being made the Stale of Evil men, to push on both King and people to ruine and destruction. But methinks the remembrance of this Fatal day, and the Condition of the slavery, Tyranny, and *Arbitrary Government*, this Nation and its two Sisters were brought to, should make us afraid to run in the same ways, and take the same courses. But let us consult the Sacred History; on the one hand what got *Absalon* and his evil Counsellour *Archithophel*, by their Rebellion, but loss of Life? and what became of *Sheba*, who blew the Trumpet of Rebellion in *Israel*? on the other side, what was the Sequel of the rash and evil Counsellors of *Rehoboam*, who sought to oppress the people with *Arbitrary Government*, but the loss of Ten Tribes, and the greatest part of his Kingdom for ever? It is said, that *David* upon the Rebellion of *Sheba* the Son *Bichri*, went no more into his Concubines, but shut them up to the day of their Death, 2 *Sam. Chap.* 20. *David* was a pious Prince, and did as he said; *I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, so shall I be saved from mine Enemies; for he spoke it out of experience: Thou hast delivered me from the Strivings of my people.*

Let every one therefore at this time, strive to reform their Lives, leave their Evil courses, and to humble themselves before the Lord, that the Blood of this day may be appeased, and that it may not leave such a Guilt upon the Nation, as may yet require the Vengeance of the Almighty to wipe it off, by permitting us to act over the like Tragedies, and to run into the like Civil Wars and Rebellion, and suffer our former Calamities, tho' our sins and Iniquities may have deserv'd it; for it is sin that bringeth War and Destruction upon a Land, for God says, *Levit.* 26. *If ye will not hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me, I will bring a Sword upon you, and I will send the Pestilence among you, and you shall be delivered into the Hands of your Enemies.* But I hope the Remembrance of the Evil of this day, will stir us up to Repentance, and that repentance will prevent Judgements, which seem to threaten us, both by Signs in the Heavens, and on the earth. Follow therefore the Counsel of S. *Peter*, *Act.* 3. 19. *Repent ye therefore and be Converted, that your Sins may be blotted out, and the times of Refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.* And then let us wait to see the Lords Salvation; Let us put our chiefest trust in God, and in the next place, let us with patience, expect the healing of our Breaches, by the Wisdom and Prudence of the approaching *Parliament*, which all Loyal hearts desire, may justly enjoy the Title of an Healing *Parliament*. *Deceit is in the Heart of them that imagine Evil; but to the Counsellors of Peace is Joy*, Prov. 12.

FINIS.

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